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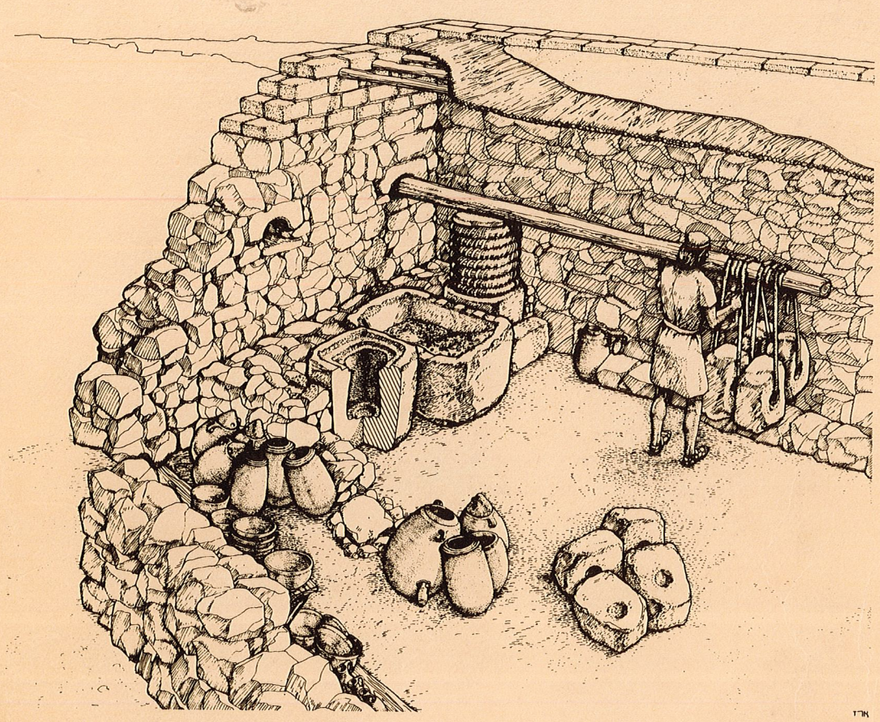

# Excavations and Surveys in Israel 1984

## Volume 3

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After removing the recent layers in the south of Area G, the continuation of the large building of Strata IX—VIII (10th century BCE) came to light. This was a public building, perhaps the administrative center of the city. Its east facade, of which 8.00 m were exposed, is built of *kurkar* blocks, some about 1.00 m long, and the walls are over 1.00 m wide. West of the facade, 5.00 m of a large courtyard or hall paved with *kurkar* were uncovered. The building extends southwards and westwards on the top of the mound. The finds were extremely scanty.

At the western end of the excavation area another section of a massive Stratum X construction was exposed, whose northern section had already been dug in the last season. In this stratum, too, a large public building seems to have existed here, though only a small part of it has been excavated.

*Area H* (in the center of the northern part of the tel). Four squares were excavated (10.00 × 10.00 m) and the upper layer, 0.80 m deep, containing some fragments of poor walls, soil and many Byzantine sherds, was removed. At that time this seems to have been an agricultural area with terrace walls and various installations. Much soil mixed with Byzantine sherds was also washed down from the area of the Byzantine baths at the western end of Area G.

Below this upper layer, light-colored soil containing sherds characteristic of Strata IX—VIII (10th century BCE) came to light. In that period the southern part of the area seems to have been an open space, while in the northern part scanty remains of structures were uncovered.

Preparations initiated by the Board of the "Haaretz" Museum for making Tel Qasile more easily accessible to the public have been progressing. Under the existing roofing in the temple area, an iron bridge enables groups of visitors to view the excavation areas. Explanatory signs to be put up soon will make individual visits possible with the aid of a brochure.

*(Communicated by A. Mazar and S. Shalev)*

## QEDESH, ROMAN TEMPLE — 1984

A third season of excavations was carried out in July 1984 in the Roman temple at Qedesh on behalf of the Institute of Archaeology and the Department of Classical Studies of Tel Aviv University. The work was directed by A. Ovadiah, M. Fischer and I. Roll, with the assistance of M. Avi'am from the Mt. Meiron Field School, A. Asa (surveyor) and volunteers from the Field School.

Two more monolithic columns, three well-preserved Corinthian capitals (one decorated with a mask in relief) and other architectural elements ornamented with various floral designs were uncovered in the northern part of the portico.

Fragments of a marble pavement which probably formed part of a processional way were exposed in the center of the sacred enclosure. The doorsill of the east gate of the enclosure was completely cleared, as well as three phases of the plaster floor adjoining it on the inside. Part of the wall enclosing the temple courtyard was also exposed.

The architectural elements decorated with various floral designs and especially the Corinthian capitals represent the style of the second half of the 2nd century CE in the Eastern Roman empire at its best.

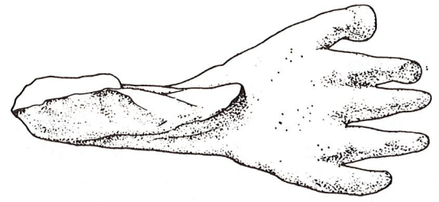
*(Communicated by A. Ovadiah, M. Fischer and I. Roll)*



## ḤORVAT QOṬMIT

The site was discovered in 1979 during the survey of the Malḥata map sponsored by the Department of Antiquities and the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University. The survey team included I. Beit-Arieh, Z. Lederman and D. Eitam. The site is situated on an elongated hilltop south of Naḥal Qoṭmit which drains into Naḥal Malḥata.

The site comprises two structures and two circular stone fences. Many pottery fragments from the end of the Iron Age (7th—6th centuries BCE) were collected on the site. Of special interest is a surprisingly large group (about 200) of pottery figurines representing both humans and animals, as well as numerous clay objects which are not containers (see drawing).



Ḥ. Qoṭmit, clay head

The first salvage excavation was conducted in April-May 1984 on behalf of the Department of Antiquities and Tel Aviv University. The work was directed by I. Beit-Arieh, assisted by D. Weiss, Semadar Harpazi, I. Levy, Margaret Lev, Liora Sandler, I. Sitri, Avivit Gera, Galia Raviv and R. Kletter. Z. Lederman and Y. Kapelyan served as surveyors, and M. Weinberg was the photographer. High school pupils from Ofakim and Sderot participated in the excavations as part of their national service.

Excavations were undertaken in the southern building and its vicinity — an area of about 300 sq m. The building (10.0 × 5.0 m) had three rooms with plastered floors covered with a thick layer of ashes (up to 0.4 m) and showing many marks of a fierce fire. Two building phases, both of the same period, could be distinguished. The finds included broken pottery and three incomplete clay figurines of the late Iron Age.

Excavations south of the building exposed an open-air shrine, including wall fragments of an enclosure (*ca.* 8.0 × 7.0 m), with a low *bama* of small stones and a *maṣṣeva* in the southwest corner. East of this enclosure, wall fragments of a circular enclosure (diam. *ca.* 8.0 m) were uncovered. A masonry basin plastered on both sides (diam. 1.0 m, height 0.4 m) was found there, as well as a stone altar and a rock-cut pit 0.8 m deep.

A large group of various clay figurines and parts of almost life-size clay statues was discovered on the smoothed rock surface in the southern half of the rectangular enclosure. More than one hundred items were recovered, including human and animal figures, zoomorphic and anthropomorphic vessels and figurine fragments. The most remarkable representation is that of a man's head with three horns. A seal carved with a figure raising his hand in blessing towards the moon was also found, as well as pottery vessels from the end of the Iron Age, including perforated or fenestrated incense cups.

*(Communicated by I. Beit-Arieh)*

## KHIRBET RAFI'A

In the winter of 1984 a burial cave (map ref. 1152/1432) was discovered by the inspection team of the Department of Antiquities for the prevention of antiquities' robberies, headed by H. Cohen. The tomb was surveyed, photographed and mapped in June 1984 by A. Kloner on behalf of the Department.